



SIX SQUARE

STOREFRONT FOR ART & ARCHITECTURE, NYC
SEPTEMBER 1999

STUDIO PRESENTATION, BROOKLYN, JULY 98

BIG BAM BREAST CANCER BENEFIT, NYC, JUNE 98

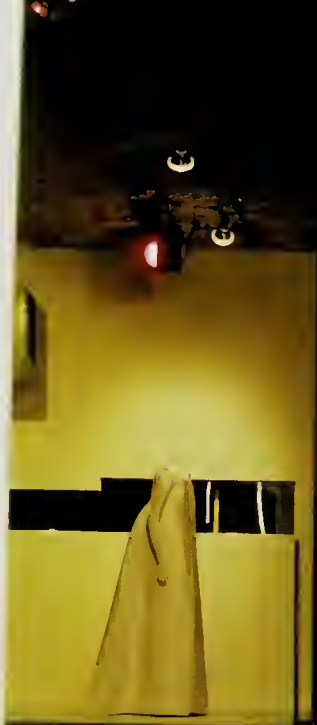
Photo: Natascha Wittgenstein

The presentation of SIX SQUARE at the *Storefront for Art and Architecture* was the third staging of this site-specific performance. This project was originally designed to be staged on two narrow 36 ft wide ledges (six squared) at the renovated Leperq Space at the Brooklyn Academy of Music with the purpose of highlighting the two interior architectural friezes and to draw attention to the invisible space behind those facades. For the *Storefront* space, this performance piece was completely restaged, new music was composed, and the choreography was further developed. The theme of the performance, however, remained the same and enhanced by the new site.

The *Storefront* building has an unusual shape: a long narrow wedge with a triangulated interior. The striking concrete facade - co-designed by architect Steven Holl and artist Vito Acconci - is divided into a series of twelve geometric panels which create spatial illusions with penetrating light and shadow. The indoor/outdoor performance of SIX SQUARE intended to open up the gallery, draw attention to the special design of the building, and to welcome the surrounding neighborhoods. The performance SIX SQUARE marked the first time in the gallery's history that this building was used as a stage.

Part One of SIX SQUARE began with the resonating sound of bells. Ceremoniously three performers drew audience from the western corner of Kenmare St. toward the building with long geometric red lanterns and a black box which was cracked with red light. In Part Two, seven performers emerged from the building and revealed hidden dimensions within the space and within their double layered costumes. When the performers opened the panels, the facade dissolved with light and a luminous red interior expanded out on to the sidewalk. When they opened their black costumes, another red costume was revealed piece by piece until only one black square remained like a final secret. As the dancers' bodies were visually transformed, their movements also transformed from mechanical (protected) to more human (vulnerable). The performance was punctuated by the final removal of the black squares.

A central theme of SIX SQUARE was "interior space versus exterior space". The motif of squares repeatedly appeared inside and outside the building and on the dancers' bodies. The intention was to develop a language for revealing hidden information, such as the hidden and secret interior spaces.



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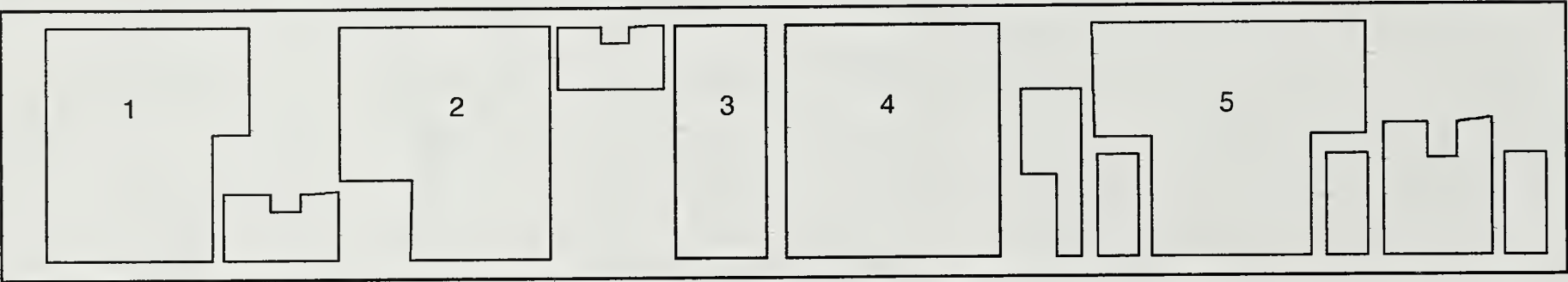
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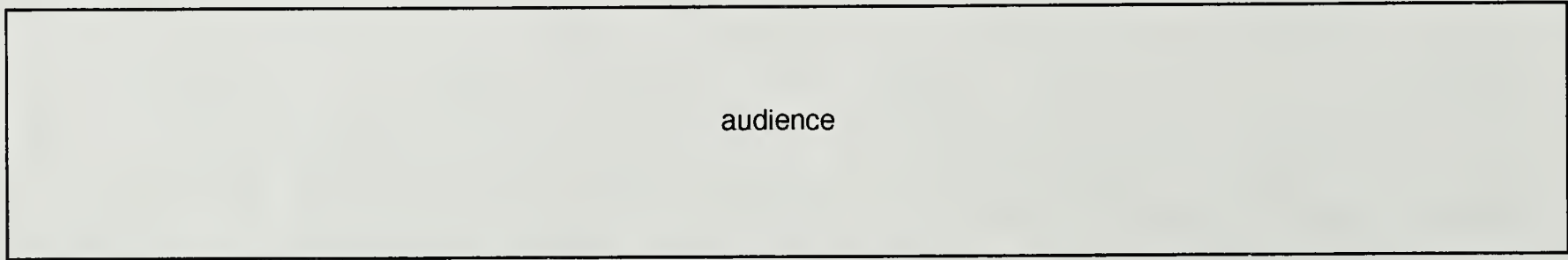
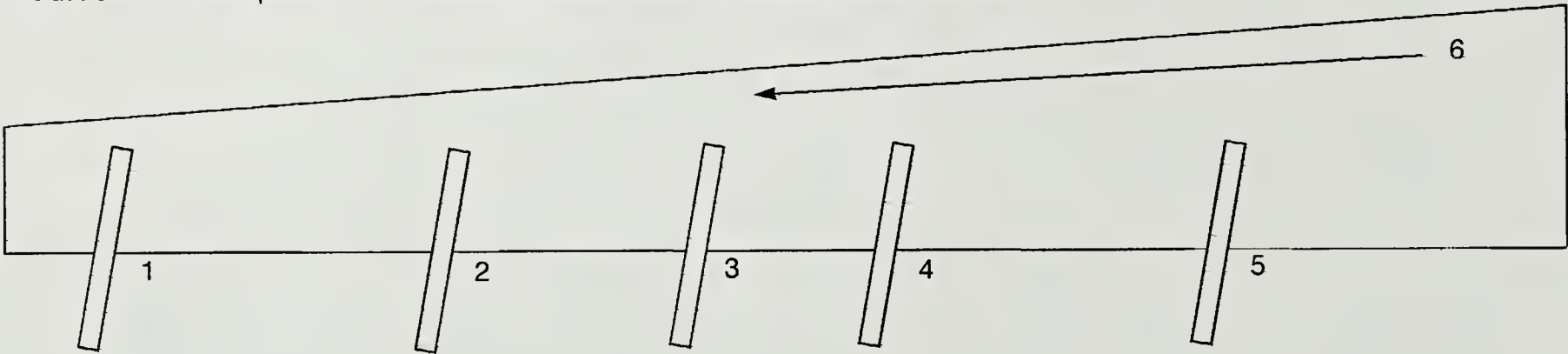
STOREFRONT ELEVATION

The gallery facade is divided into twelve rotating panels. Numbers 1-5 are the largest panel which rotate around a vertical axis. These panels will provide the main exit and entry spaces for the performers.



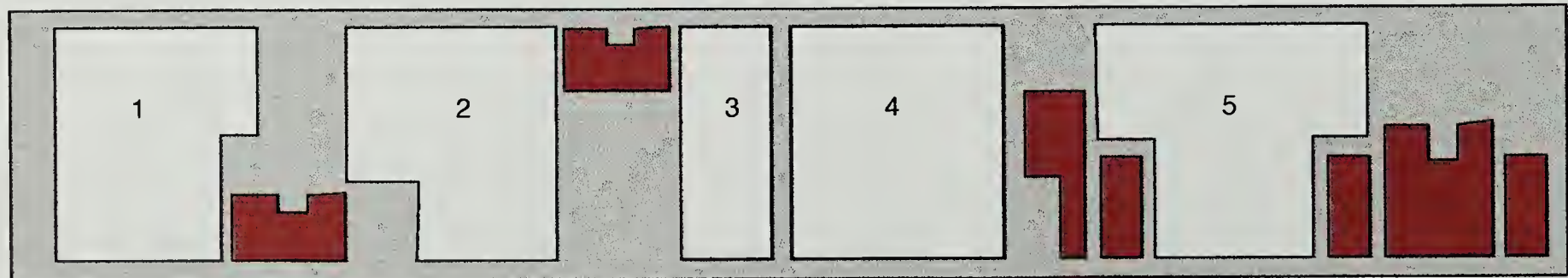
STOREFRONT PLAN performed

- 1 -5 characters appear through vertical rotating panels
- 6 character crawls inside gallery space, visible through horizontal panels
- The audience will watch performance from Kenmare Street which will be closed to automobile traffic.



STOREFRONT ELEVATION performed

the gallery interior will be colored with tinted theater lights. During the performance, the building interior and exterior will become animated with changing light.





Photographs of hand boxes & costumes by Natascha Wittgenstein
Sketches by Said Mahrouf

